

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, AR

SUBJECT: SPLIT IN MISIONES LEGISLATURE PREVENTS IT FROM CONVENING

REF: BA 2709

1. THE NEWLY-ELECTED MISIONES LEGISLATURE IS ALREADY HAVING DIFFICULTY GETTING STARTED. THE PROBLEM RESULTS FROM THE FACT THAT THE BODY IS SPLIT EVENLY BETWEEN 16 LEGISLATORS FROM THE FREJULI (12 PERONISTS AND 4 MID) AND 16 FROM THE OPPOSITION (13 UCR, 2 TERCERA POSICION AND 1 PARTIDO AUTENTICO). TWO ATTEMPTS BY THE OPPOSITION TO CONVENE THE LEGISLATURE HAVE FAILED, THE QUORUM NECESSARY TO BEGIN SESSIONS HAVING BEEN DENIED BY A BOYCOTT ON THE PART OF FREJULI LEGISLATORS.

2. THE SELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT AND 2 VICE PRESIDENTS IS THE CHIEF ISSUE. INSTEAD OF FOLLOWING THE NORMAL PRACTICE OF ACQUIESCING TO THE MAJORITY PARTY, THE OPPOSITION PUT UP THEIR OWN SLATE OF 3 CANDIDATES (ONE FROM EACH OF THE 3 PARTIES). SINCE THE PRESIDENT OF THE LEGISLATURE CASTS A SECOND VOTE IN THE EVENT OF A TIE, THE OFFICE IS OF CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE. THE UCR LEGISLATORS IN MISIONES ARE SUPPORTING THE OPPOSITION SLATE AGAINST THE WISHES OF THEIR NATIONAL PARTY LEADERSHIP.

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3. A THIRD ATTEMPT TO CONVENE IS SCHEDULED FOR MAY 12.

AFTER 3 FAILURES THE PROVINCIAL CONSTITUTION STATES ONLY ONE THIRD OF THE LEGISLATORS ARE NECESSARY FOR COMMENCEMENT OF THE SESSION. THE OPPOSITION WOULD THEN BE ABLE TO MEET AND ELECT THE OPPOSITION SLATE. COURT ACTION BY THE FREJULI OR A MOVE BY THE FEDERAL INTERVENTOR (INTERVENTION WILL EXPIRE ON MAY 25) TO PREVENT THIS CAN BE EXPECTED.

4. COMMENT. THE LEGISLATIVE IMPASSE IN MISIONES IS EMBARRASSING TO THE GOVERNMENT BECAUSE IT EMPHASIZES THE FACT THAT THE FREJULI (LET ALONE THE PERONISTS) DID NOT WIN A MAJORITY IN THE PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE. THIS DETRACTS FROM THE IMPRESSION OF A SUBSTANTIAL VICTORY WHICH FLOWED FROM THE FACTS THAT THE PERONISTS RECEIVED MORE TOTAL VOTES THAN THEY HAD IN 1973, AND THAT THE PARTIDO AUTENTICO (DISSIDENT LEFTIST PERONISTS) SCORED VERY LOW. THE SITUATION IN THE LEGISLATURE POINTS UP THE FACT THAT THE OPPOSITION DID QUITE WELL IN THE ELECTIONS, AND MAY GIVE THE PERONISTS AND THEIR ALLIES A VERY DIFFICULT TIME.

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